P. Cunningham, Mr. Charles Knight, and many more, including several members of Parliament, and the *élite* of Manchester and its neighbourhood.

A report by Mr. Edward Edwards, the librarian, was read in abstract, from which it appears that there are already 16,013 volumes in the library of reference, and 5,305 in the lending library. The best furnished class of works in the former at present is that of history, of which there are 6,707 volumes. Of periodicals, poetry, prose fiction, &c. there are 4,626 volumes. Presents have been interchanged with the Smithsonian Institute of America, which has returned the Manchester contributions twentyfold. Of the lending library about 2,000 volumes are presents. There is at present shelving for 6,000 to 7,000 additional volumes, and room for many more. The total cost of the building in its present state, with all its fittings, furniture, &c. has been 6,963*l.* odd, of which 1,100*l.* were for shelving and furniture alone. The amount realised in the first subscription list, was 10,125*l.* of which about 800*l.* were raised by voluntary subscriptions, of more than 20,000 of the working classes! A second list of subscriptions had since been made up, amounting to 2,300*l.*; and 500*l.* more would suffice to clear off every liability, including 4,282*l.* the entire cost of the two libraries.

The Earl of Shaftesbury, in his address, on moving the first of a series of resolutions, said that besides the local benefits which would arise from the foundation of such an institution,—in these days of pursuit and excitement, in these days of novel projects and restless inquiry, in these days of accelerated intercourse, when time and space almost seem extinct, you are preparing thereby an antidote to mischief that might otherwise arise; and in setting an example that may be imitated, and laying down a principle of universal application, you assert that the true end of commerce is to make the institutions of the country subservient to its civilization, and then its civilization subservient to the social and moral amelioration of the whole family of mankind.

Sir E. Bulwer Lytton next spoke. In seconding the first motion, he said, I am reminded that there was once a Scottish peasant who, having raised himself to a rank in the eyes of posterity beyond that of ordinary princes, desired also to raise the whole class which he ennobled in the scale of intellectual nobility, and was the first to institute libraries for the people in the rural districts of Scotland. That peasant was Robert Burns, the poet; and when I look around this noble hall, and this large assembly, I own I do wish that Burns could have foreseen what a magnificence you have given to his idea. . . . . Far beyond the sphere of our daily labour you have opened the gates of that world which, like the divine poem of our own Milton, goes back to the infancy of creation, and forward to the promise of an infinite hereafter; so that I may say to those students whom this library will call forth and create—I may say to them, almost in the very words with which that poem concludes—

> "That world is all before you, where to choose
> Your place of rest. Be Providence your guide."

Mr. Charles Dickens said (in allusion to his exertions on behalf of the Literary Guild), that from the mere force of habit he rather missed the prompter, and would therefore trouble them with a very short speech. He would have rejoiced to have seen in this place, instead of himself, and to have heard in this place, instead of his voice, the working man of Manchester, in the solid and nervous language in which he had often heard such men give utterance to the feelings of their breasts, how he knows that the books, stored here for his behoof, will cheer him through the struggles and toils of his life,—will raise him in his self-respect,—will teach him that capital and labour are not opposed, but are mutually dependent and mutually supporting,—will enable him to tread down blinding prejudices, corrupt misrepresentations, and everything but the truth, into the dust.

Mr. Thackeray followed. Of course, he said, among the many sanitary and social reforms which every man interested in the public welfare is now anxious to push forward, the great measure of books will not be neglected; and we look to this, as much as we look to air, or as we look to light, or to water, for benefitting our poor. If books do sooth, and cheer, and console,—if books do enlighten, and enliven, and fortify,—if they do make sorrow bearable to us, or teach us to forget or to endure it,—if they do create in us harmless tears or happy laughter,—if they do bring forth in us that peace and that feeling of goodwill, of which Mr. Dickens spoke but now, and which anybody who reads his books must have felt has come from them, surely we will not grudge these inestimable blessings to the poorest of our friends, but will try, with all our might, to diffuse their charm that previous benefits over all.

Sir James Stephen delivered a very fine speech, from which also we can only quote a few remarks. Manchester, said Sir James, is a name of deep moral even of awful significance; for here is the metropolis of that Titanic industry, on the continued success of which England has deliberately pledged her station and her authority among the nations of the world. Here are daily exhibited, in the light of day, miracles which no scepticism disputes—the miracles wrought by mechanism and by capital, in the hands of a skilful, an energetic, and a united population. Here is the mainspring of that mighty commerce by which we are united in the bonds of peace to every kindred, tongue, and people of this earth. Here is the theatre of that domestic union where meet in friendly concert, or in generous rivalry, manual labourers from each of the three kingdoms of our gracious sovereign—intellectual labourers from every field of science which is tributary to art—spiritual labourers from each of the churches which collectively constitute the church universal. Here is the sphere of the great and tremendous experiment, how physical force, in its most formidable aspect, may be brought into a glad subjection to moral force, in its gentlest and its kindliest forms. Here has been proclaimed, with unexampled success and eloquence, the truth of that which the French would call the *solidarité* of mankind; the truth, that the members of every human society, from the domestic household to the great commonwealth of nations, are knit together for good or for evil, by links wrought by the Almighty arm, and which, therefore, it is not permitted to any human hand with impunity to relax.

We are living, said he in conclusion, at a time when it is not permitted to any man to withhold the little which it may be in his power to contribute towards the advancement of such objects as this. These mighty discoveries and strange inventions, these gigantic revolutions, these unheard-of migrations, this heaving of the lower strata of human society, this increasing power of the popular voice,—all these things testify that we have reached the accomplishment of the prophecy of that time when 'men shall run to and fro on the earth, and knowledge shall be increased,'—and therefore that we are approaching a great crisis and catastrophe of human affairs. To approach such a crisis or catastrophe in a right spirit it behoves us all to do our best.

A great seed has been planted in Manchester.

The Synagogue, Duke's-place, after being repaired and decorated, was consecrated on the 2nd inst. with a ceremony and an audience that took you back to Nineveh. The first synagogue here was built by Moses Hart, "A.M. 5482;" and "A.M. 5550," his daughter, Mrs. Judy Levy, gave 4,000*l.* towards rebuilding it. The decorations offer no peculiarity for comment. Mr. Wallen was the architect employed, Mr. King the builder, and Mr. Hyams the painter.

Warrington Markets' Competition.—The committee, after some months' delay have at length selected the design of Messrs. Barry and Murray, of Liverpool.

AMERICAN SAYINGS AND DOINGS.

In the quality and construction of British and American mechanism, there is a contrast which is forcibly, though with some partiality on the one hand and a little exaggeration on the other, pointed out by the editor of the *Boston Journal*, in a leading article, from which we may quote a few paragraphs:—

"English mechanism," he remarks, "is cumbersome. From the wheelbarrow to the steam-engine, through every description of machinery, there is a great degree of strength. [Yes, doubtless a greater degree than generally exists in those engines, of whose tremendous explosions on American rivers we ever and anon hear the astounding *report* even across the wide Atlantic!] Stock is used freely; much too freely in a vast many cases. The strong parts are made very strong, and where strength is not so necessary, stock is put in freely, which gives the whole an overgrown appearance. We do not speak exclusively of the steam-engine, but take the farm implements, the carts, ploughs, harrows, harness, and, in fact, almost every description of mechanism. Every thing is rivetted, bolted, and braced, and made to endure almost for an age.

It is far different with the Yankee. His motto is to go a-head. Everything is done in a hurry. Stock and labour are dear, and capital is scarce, and he wants to get rich in a hurry: hence durability is not thought of. An English mechanic never thinks of getting rich. If he can keep soul and body together, and drink his pint of ale daily, it is enough. But the Yankee, day in and day out, has other thoughts. Go into an American machine-shop and ask the labourer how long he intends to work at his trade? 'Only a few years, and then I shall settle down,' is the answer. While he is cutting that screw, or chipping that block, he is thinking of an improvement in a patent brick-machine, or water-wheel, or other implement, that he anticipates will fill his pockets with gold. . . . .

But why do we not do things as well as the English? The answer is to be found in the different facilities enjoyed by the English and American artisans. Jonathan is young and comparatively poor. He commenced his clearing in the woods with nothing but his hands. He got out of his teens and had some hard blows with his father Bull, and started on his own book. Whatever he has, has been earned by energy and industry. Now there is a vast difference between having capital and being without it. A man with a heavy purse can command whatever he will, but poverty must do as it can. Capital in England is a drug at 3 per cent. while here it is often not obtainable even at 6. Labour is cheap there, it is dear here. There stock is cheap, because labour is cheap. Here it is dear, because labour is dear.

Another reason why English mechanism is generally more durable than American is, that an Englishman never does but one thing. Go into their machine shops to-day and you will see one man making rivets, another cutting screws, another boring holes, and so on. Go again next year and you will see the same men making rivets, cutting screws, or boring holes. They never change, but year in and year out, through life, they pursue the same branch of their employment till death rivets and screws them into their narrow coffins.

Go now into an American shop to-day, and you will see an active-looking workman filing a piece of iron; to-morrow he will be turning a cylinder; next week he will make the connecting-rod; next month he will draft an engine; and next year he will be the overseer of the whole concern. Now, it is evident that work done by different individuals will not have that finish that it will have when each does his own particular part. But it is also evident, that the mechanic that has an ambition before him to reach the top round of the ladder, and understand every part of the engine, as a machine, will in the end do far more to perfect machinery than the man who makes rivets from the cradle to the grave."

In engineering Jonathan seems to confess that he has still his "Brunels" to get. At least we find him lately talking of "the future Brunel of America." To be sure he has him

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